

Resource Identification & Inventory

Who Can Help and Respond

The goal of this step is to identify the assets within the facility and in the surrounding community that you can draw upon for help *BEFORE*, *DURING* and *AFTER* an emergency occurs.

The following excerpt from a leading text book, *"Emergency Management: Principles and Practices for Local Government"* discusses five resource types in terms of coordination during all four phases of Comprehensive Emergency Management, or CEM.

Your responsibility is to build a CEM program for your health care facility, and to do that, you will need both support from the Director and your colleagues and assistance on the planning team. *"Who Can Help"* refers to the key staff within the facility and those in the community who are part of the planning team.

Obviously, the primary use of a resource inventory is for obtaining support from others during the emergency. The planning team needs to determine the organization of such an inventory, research and identify what is available, have informal "get acquainted" meetings with the resource-providers, learn about any costs that might be

incurred, etc. Then, after the inventory is completed, it will require constant maintenance and updating so that when it is needed, *there are no surprises!*

Types of Resources in the Community

"For effective disaster mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery, five resources need to be coordinated: information, people, money, physical space, and equipment. The nature of the resource exchange depends partly on the phase of the disaster. Although the exchanges associated with each of the four major phases differ from one another, in the following discussion, the main distinction is between pre-disaster (mitigation and preparedness) and post-disaster (response and recovery) types of resources." ¹

Information Resources

"Although the general and pervasive nature of information makes it difficult to describe in an exact way, one may differentiate the kinds of information that must be exchanged. In pre-disaster stages, for example, coordination requires the sharing of information about hazard assessments, planning, training programs and exercises, and the sharing of knowledge or opinions related to all four phases of emergency management. In other words, in the predisaster phases, the

sharing of information builds a capacity to respond effectively. During these phases, information is used to establish, refine and maintain mitigation and preparedness.

In contrast, information exchanged in the post-disaster stages includes medical assessments, damage assessments, and crisis counseling. In other words, during post-disaster stages, information guides action. An effective response to disaster requires the accurate and timely transfer of information - and one of the most serious problems in disasters is disruption of the flow of information." ²

Human Resources

"Lending or exchanging personnel is an essential aspect of coordination. As part of preparedness, an organization's experienced staff or persons with special expertise are assigned specific tasks and responsibilities in other organizations. Emergency managers and other key resource people serve on the boards of various organizations to promote concerted mitigation and preparedness efforts. Hazard assessment experts and planners share appraisals and discuss mobilization strategies to uncover snags and conflicts." ³

Fiscal Resources

"The exchange of any resource involves a cost, and money reflects the value assigned to the particular exchange. In predisaster situations, direct monetary exchanges include grants and fees for service. Within government, grants are usually made from higher to lower levels. Services provided for a fee include functions such as hazard assessment, education and training. During the immediate response period, altruism and concerns about survival displace direct exchanges of money. Companies and stores open their doors and dispense food, tools, and whatever materials they have on hand to help the response effort." ⁴

Facilities

"The arrangement of buildings and land used to carry out emergency management functions during predisaster stages affects the pattern of relationships between the organizations in a community. For example, evidence indicates that organizations located in close proximity are more likely to share resources, which suggests, in turn, that patterns of building occupancy affect the exchange of resources in mitigation and preparedness. If an emergency manager finds that organizations involved in emergency service delivery are spread about, he or she should draw upon the forms of coordination discussed below

(see the section on forms of coordination) to facilitate contacts.

During pre-disaster phases, land sites and buildings are identified for possible use in emergency operations, sheltering, and other functions. Agreements on the number of potentially useful sites, the more prepared the community. Efforts to assess both geographical areas of vulnerability and the resistance of buildings to hazards contribute to mitigation. After a disaster, a limited number of sites are selected for emergency operations centers, medical services, and sheltering." ⁵

Physical Resources

"Throughout the pre-disaster period, equipment such as educational tools, special materials for disaster exercises, and the gear necessary to conduct hazard assessments is shared. Like buildings and land, field equipment is identified and inventoried during predisaster phases to build resource capacity.

Post-disaster exchange of equipment is critical in saving lives and delivering services. Special communications equipment is often brought into disaster areas from neighboring communities, as is heavy equipment (to remove debris), four-wheel-drive vehicles, or boats." ⁶

How to manage resources during emergencies will be discussed in

Chapter 17, which explains the Incident Command System (ICS).

Notes:

¹ Gillespie, David F., Coordinating Community Resources, Chapter 3, **Emergency Management: Principles and Practices for Local Government**, International City Management Association, Washington, D.C., 1991, pp. 63-66.

² Ibid..

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.